In 500 words or less, describe your judicial philosophy.

Those who distance themselves from the language of the United States Constitution show their disdain for its words and the principles upon which it stands. Those who size up legislative history and glean legislative intent often stray from the very text of the statutes and laws that they are called upon to follow and apply. Justice Scalia once said: "[It] is the law that governs, not the intent of the lawgiver." Scalia, A. (1997), Tanner Lecture, Cambridge University.

The framers of the Constitution granted the power of effectuating public policy to the legislative hranch, not the judicial hranch. Wheu the judiciary strictly interprets laws, honoring the reasoning of previous decisions and precedent, it is at its best. Originalism adheres to the original intent of the framers.

Activist judges who maneuver into the policy-making realm of the legislative hranch undermine the integrity of the roles and powers granted to the hranches of government within the four corners of the very document -- the Constitution -- which they seek to analyze and interpret. Judges who exercise restraint show a solemn respect for the roles of each hranch and the concept of separation of powers.

A loosely constructed interpretation of the U.S. Constitution lacks the certainty, predictahility, and reliability necessary for a free society to espouse a common respect for order and the law. Those who would breathe new words, concepts, ideas, and policies into the text of statutes do not interpret the law as written nor do they exhibit a respect for the legislators who created the law. They self-appoint themselves as super-legislators, treading upon the powers granted to the legislature and de-legitimizing the judiciary's status with hroad sweeping opinions extending well beyond the case before the court. For activist judges, the temptation to infuse their own agendas is too great. If a law is not to their liking, then it is simply discounted, ignored, or reinterpreted congruent with the jurist's political leanings.

The U.S. Supreme Court of the 1960s and 1970s was known for judicial activism. In lieu of dcference to the will of policymakers, the court imposed its own will. In Wisconsin, just over ten years ago, our highest court gained a reputation for activism hy imposing mandatory requirements upon the executive hranch. The puhlic knows when judges add language and meanings not found in thc text of laws. Superimposing personal policy views under the guisc of "interpreting" laws does more than disrespect the public. It endangers the Constitution.

Adherence to interpretations of law according to the principles of strict construction is one of the foremost values in practicing judicial restraint. Earlier, I spoke of my desire to effectuate positive change as a leadcr. Howcver, be assured that I am ever mindful of starc decisis and the need for judicial restraint.

If selected, I will he even-handed, non-partisan, and non-biased. As a legal technician, I will exercise restraint, ohey authority, apply laws to facts, respectfully grant the requisite legal processes due to all litigants, and endeavor to do so with tact and judicial restraint.

In 500 words or less, name one of the best United States or Wisconsin Supreme Court opinions in the last thirty years and explain why you feel that way.

I choose to discuss the United States Supreme Court decision in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby, Inc.*, and *Conestoga Wood Specialties Corporation v. Burwell*, 134 S.Ct. 2751 (2014). Some observers may point out that the decision merely addresses an issue of statutory construction and interpretation of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, without even addressing the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment. However, I find the decision noteworthy for several other reasons.

The case addresses the tension between reproductive rights (pro-abortion) and proponents of religious liberty. However, most significantly, the decision also stands out as an example of the judicial branch of government restraining the executive branch's powers in favor of granting people owning for-profit entities the right to object to provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) based upon sincerely held religious beliefs.

In these cases, both business owners believed that life begins at conception and that any birth control method that could lead to the destruction of embryos would be morally wrong. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) mandated that employers provide insurance coverage with its set of pre-determined provisions. It also required employers to pay for the services. Failure to pay would result in exorbitant penalties, according to the opinion (a major factor in the "substantial burden" standard analysis).

From the perspective of the business owners, the course of events presented a troubling set of circumstances. First, the government mandated that employers must provide insurance (which both companies already offered). Next, the government set the parameters for what the insurance policies must cover, including a full breadth of contraceptives. This position presents a major dilemma for many citizens across the country, morally offensive to some and violative of their religious beliefs. The government opted out religious groups and non-profits, ceding the moral and religious ground. However, HHS did not provide accomodations in the case of for-profit businesses. Failure to comply with its provisions would result in multi-million dollar penalties to the companies. So, the court's action effectively curtailed and restrained an ambitious piece of legislation and the executive branch's exercise over personally held moral and religious beliefs.

There is an additional reason why I find this decision to be significant. HHS went so far as to argue that the business owners' position was flawed. Even though HHS already had acknowledged the moral position for religious groups and non-profits, HHS argued that the business owners actually bore no moral culpability in paying for coverage. Instead, HHS maintained that the moral culpability fell upon the shoulders of those who actually decide to destroy their embryos. Justice Alito noted the inappropriateness of courts presuming to determine the plausibility of a given religious claim.

In determining that HHS' regulations imposing an obligation upon for-profit business owners violated the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, the high court determined that the federal government must be considerate of the sincerely held religious beliefs of our citizenry. The case represents a major victory for proponents of religious freedom.